

# EXHIBIT I



## Permanent Observer Mission of The State of Palestine to the United Nations New York

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### Statement by H.E. President Mahmoud Abbas, President of the State of Palestine, Delivered before the United Nations Security Council on The Situation in the Middle East, including the Palestine Question on 11 February 2020

11 FEBRUARY 2020 BY PALESTINE AT THE UN

Mr. President, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I come before you to appeal on behalf of 13 million Palestinians for a just peace, nothing more, nothing less. I come before you to reaffirm the Palestinian position of rejection of the US-Israel deal, supported by the positions of the League of Arab States, Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and African Union, which all categorically rejected this deal, in addition to the statements by the European Union, Russia, China and Japan and the countries of the world, as well as, and I want to particularly mention them, the statements by the Secretary-General, all reaffirming commitment to the international terms of reference and United Nations resolutions.

This broad rejection of the deal stems from the unilateral positions contained in it, and the fact it clearly violates international law, United Nations resolutions and the Arab Peace Initiative; ignores the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people and their right to self-determination, freedom, independence in their own State; and attempts to grant legitimacy to illegal measures such as the settlements and expropriation and annexation of Palestinian land.

I stress here that this deal or any part of it should not be considered as an international basis or reference for negotiations as it constitutes a US-Israel preemptive deal aimed at liquidating the Palestinian cause. The fact alone that it denies Palestinian sovereignty over East Jerusalem warrants its rejection. The fact that it transforms our people and land into fragmented, isolated communities warrants its rejection. The fact that it deprives us of control over our land, borders, water, and airspace warrants its rejection. The fact that it erases the question of Palestine refugees warrants its rejection.

This plan destroys the basis on which the peace process was launched. It disregards the signed agreements based on the vision of two States on 1967 borders. It will not bring security or peace to our region. We therefore cannot accept it and will confront its implementation on the ground.

Here is the conclusion of the plan that was presented to us (shows conceptual map), and the "State" that it gives us, and that looks like Swiss cheese. Who



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Here is the conclusion of the plan that was presented to us (shows conceptual map), and the "State" that it gives us, and that looks like Swiss cheese. Who among you would accept such a State?

This deal, ladies and gentlemen, contains diktats, consecrates occupation and annexation by military force, and would lead to an Apartheid system, an anachronistic reality being implemented today in Palestine. It rewards occupation instead of holding it accountable for the crimes it has committed for decades against our people and land.

I want to express our gratitude for the positions expressed by countries, regional and international organizations, parliaments, and Members of the Security Council that have risen along our side to defend the international consensus, based on international law and relevant UN resolutions. I also want to thank Israelis – yes Israelis – who expressed rejection of this deal in various ways. 300 Israeli officers have declared rejection of the deal, they say we now fight for justice (shows the petition). We also salute the demonstrations in Tel Aviv against this deal. We also express appreciation to the members of US Congress and Senate as well as US organizations and free voices that have expressed such rejection, and we value their commitment and their support to peace and to international legitimacy (shows letters by 107 Members of Congress and by 12 Senators, including 3 Presidential candidates).

And we salute our Palestinian people, and Arab and Muslim peoples and all peace-loving nations around the world. Palestinians have come out in thousands, hundreds of thousands, in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, despite freezing temperatures, to say no to this unjust plan. So it is not as some may say that it is only Abu Mazen and a couple of people who reject the plan. Hundreds of thousands took to the streets to say no; tens of thousands around the world also came out to say no. To those who still insist that this deal is fair, we say it is not.

I come before you today to say that peace between the Palestinian and Israeli peoples is still possible and achievable. I have come here to build an international partnership to achieve a comprehensive, just and lasting peace, which remains our strategic objective.

This deal does not constitute an international endeavor. It came from one country with the support of another with the aim of imposing it on the world and against international legitimacy as enshrined in hundreds of United Nations resolutions, including tens of Security Council resolutions. This deal is unacceptable.

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen Members of the Council,

I must ask: why the insistence to unilaterally draft this US-Israeli plan, despite the fact that we were in a dialogue with the US administration all of 2017 and discussed all final status issues, including in a long dialogue between President Trump and myself. We spoke at length about the international legitimacy, the vision of two States. He told me he was ready to immediately announce that he adhered to this vision. We spoke of the 1967 borders, Jerusalem, security and all other issues that were not settled in Oslo.

I was pleased with this dialogue with him, only then to be surprised by the announcement of Jerusalem "undivided capital of Israel" and the transfer of the US embassy and calls to the rest of the international community to follow suit; the closure of the PLO office in Washington; the cutting of assistance to

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I was pleased with this dialogue with him, only then to be surprised by the announcement of Jerusalem "undivided capital of Israel" and the transfer of the US embassy and calls to the rest of the international community to follow suit; the closure of the PLO office in Washington; the cutting of assistance to us, \$840 million worth of aid; the termination of funding to UNRWA. I don't know who gave such dreadful advice. The President Trump I know is not like that, and I don't know where these actions came from.

Let me recall that the Madrid Peace Conference, the Oslo Accords, the Washington negotiations, as well as the Annapolis Conference for peace, were all on the basis of the international terms of reference and United Nations resolutions and called for negotiations on all final status issues, including Jerusalem, which was an issue for negotiation not imposition or preemption, and not a grant to be given to Israel. No, this is an occupied territory. Who has the right to give it away? This Council is the highest authority in the world and we accept your rulings and decisions.

All throughout, ladies and gentlemen, we remained committed to implementation of all agreements concluded with Israel, and acted responsibly, and that is why we achieved the respect of the world. 140 countries have recognized the State of Palestine and we have become an integral part of the international system as an observer State. We have not been able to become a Member State because of the prospect of a US veto. We joined over 120 Conventions, agencies and organizations, and we, the observer State, chaired the Group of 77 and China for the year 2019. We do exist.

And we continue building the national institutions of our State based on the rule of law and the international standards for a modern, democratic State, as well as on transparency and accountability, including fighting against corruption. Indeed, our country is at the forefront of the efforts to fight corruption, and this young State still under occupation is corruption free and those who say otherwise can come and see for themselves. I invite the Security Council to send a fact-finding mission to Palestine on this and all matters.

We have worked to empower women and youth and spread the culture of peace among our people, all our people. We tell them we reject war and terror, violence and terror worldwide, and we have concluded protocols with 83 countries first and foremost with the United States, as well as Canada, Russia, Japan, and others, to fight terrorism. We are not terrorists. And, regardless of what we endure, we will remain committed to the fight against terrorism.

We held elections three times, as we believe in democracy, but Israel refuses to let us organize elections. Why? Because they prevent us from organizing elections in Jerusalem, despite the fact that we held elections there in 1996, 2005 and 2006. Now as Jerusalem is being considered the "undivided capital of Israel" we are being prevented from holding elections there. That is not acceptable. East Jerusalem is ours and West Jerusalem is theirs, and both countries can cooperate together.

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen Members of the Council,

They say we missed the opportunities for peace. This is not true. Abba Eban happened to say one day that "Palestinians never miss an opportunity to miss an opportunity". Where did he come up with this, I do not know. And Kushner is repeating it. What is the opportunity that we have missed? Don't use such silly slogans.

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We have accepted all United Nations resolutions, starting with Security Council resolutions 242 and 338, all the way to 2334, adopted three years ago by your Council. We became an active actor on the international arena. In 1993, we concluded the interim Oslo Accords and remained committed to all its provisions and to the exchange of letters between us and Israel, which provide for mutual recognition. In Oslo we recognized the right of Israel to exist, as stated by Yasser Arafat, and Rabin recognized the PLO as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. What opportunities did we miss?

We were receptive to the efforts of successive US administrations and engaged with them, as well as with international initiatives and all invitations for dialogue and negotiations. Yet, at no point in these efforts was the bare minimum of justice for our people based on international law and United Nations resolutions ever presented. And, now, this current government representing the occupying Power is actively undermining all international efforts.

We have dealt with every opportunity seriously as peace is in the interest of our people and of the peoples of the world.

Several countries invited us, Russia, Japan, Belgium, Netherlands, to meet with Netanyahu on their soil and Netanyahu never honored such an invitation. I went three times to Moscow and Netanyahu never came. So who does not want peace?

So tell me what opportunities have we missed?

At the same time, Israeli governments and Israeli settlers continue destroying any prospect for peace, accelerating their colonial settlement activities all over the occupied West Bank, constructing settlements unchecked, alter the character of occupied Jerusalem, pursuing their aggression against Muslim and Christian holy sites, expropriating land, and continuing their war and blockade against our people in the Gaza Strip. They are unfortunately backed by the might of the United States, which has undertaken a number of decisions in breach of international law that have been rejected by the rest of the world and also by US Congress members and many organizations working for peace, including American Jewish organizations.

The US Congress, in its decision number 326, opposed the policy announced by US Secretary of State Pompeo and of the US President on annexation and settlement activities and reaffirmed the two-State solution and the right of our people to self-determination. These are not solely our positions, but the positions of the US Congress.

I must also stress that we refuse to forgo political solutions for economic assistance, that invention they pursued in Bahrain, Warsaw, and elsewhere, saying they will give us 50 billion dollars, but where is the political solution? We refuse that. A political solution comes first. And if it is followed by economic assistance that is fine, but economic assistance is not the primary issue. We thank all countries that support us and without conditions to build our Palestinian institutions that will carry us towards our independent State with God's will.

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen Members of the Council,

In these difficult times and before it is too late, I want to address President



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Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen Members of the Council,

In these difficult times and before it is too late, I want to address President Trump to tell him the US plan cannot achieve peace and security by erasing international legitimacy. Who can erase international legitimacy? In this highest body, who can ignore this? The plan presented by President Trump does that and denies the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people, and removes East Jerusalem from under Palestinian sovereignty, and will not lead to the implementation of the vision of two independent sovereign States, Israel and Palestine.

I therefore appeal to President Trump to show fairness and justice, to support the implementation of United Nations resolutions, to preserve the chance of achieving genuine peace between Palestinians and Israelis. There can be no imposed peace.

Let us achieve peace together, and we managed to do so without intervention in Oslo and without knowledge of any State, and whoever says I knew, I challenge them. We reached an interim agreement and were ready to honor it for five years until we concluded a final peace agreement, but they assassinated Rabin. Why did they assassinate Rabin? May he rest in peace.

From this chamber, I call on the Quartet, composed of the United States, the Russian Federation, the European Union and the United Nations, as well as the members of your august Council, to convene an international peace conference, with a view to implementing United Nations resolutions, first and foremost resolution 2334, as well as the vision of two States and the Arab Peace Initiative, that we insist on as part and parcel of the international legitimacy, and of resolution 1515, through the establishment of an international mechanism with the Quartet and any other countries to oversee negotiations between the parties. But in all honesty, we will not accept the United States as sole broker as we have tried this before.

I call on the international community in its entirety to pressure Israel, the occupying Power, to end its occupation practices and policies that aim to annex Palestinian land. What right do you have to annex our land? You will destroy the chances of peace.

In this historic moment, I extend my hand for peace once again before it is too late, and I hope to find a real partner for peace in Israel, any person who believes in peace, so we can achieve genuine peace that will bear fruit for the present and future generations of Palestinians and Israelis and for the countries and people of the world.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Our Palestinian people can no longer withstand the Israeli occupation of our country, and the situation as a whole is explosive. To prevent that, we need to renew hope for our people. Do not deny hope to our people and the peoples of the region to live in freedom, independence and peace, and the hope that the free world will rise for its rights. Do not kill that hope for our people.

I want to show you a map of Palestine and the changes that have occurred on the ground since 1917, 1937, 1947, 1948 until 2020. What I see breaks my heart. Is this what we deserve? Is this what the Palestinian people deserve? Why were we there and now find ourselves in these islands? (shows maps)

On this occasion, I address the Israeli people to tell them that the pursuit of occupation, settlements, military control over another nation will not bring

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On this occasion, I address the Israeli people to tell them that the pursuit of occupation, settlements, military control over another nation will not bring security or peace. We only have one choice, to be partners and neighbors, each in our independent sovereign State. Let us uphold together this just choice before it is too late.

I reiterate that our conflict is not with the followers of the Jewish faith. We are not against Jews. We Muslims are not against Jews. The Muslim that says I am against the Jews is an infidel. If one says he is against Jews or the Torah, he is an infidel, not a Muslim. We are not against Jews; we are against whoever oppresses us regardless of their religion. And, our struggle is not against Jews, but against those who occupy our land. We will therefore continue to pursue our struggle, during which we have endured great sacrifices with thousands of martyrs, prisoners, and wounded, in order to end this occupation and achieve our independent State. We reaffirm that our people will not kneel. We want our rights, and we salute all those who help us achieve them. We will not surrender to this occupation, however long it takes and no matter what sacrifices we have to endure.

And I conclude by saying once again: I am ready to resume negotiations, as I have always been, if there is an Israeli partner ready to negotiate, under the auspices of the Quartet, and based on the international terms of reference, and I am serious in what I say. I am ready to remain here in the house of international legitimacy to start these negotiations immediately.

Let me also state once again that we will not resort to violence or terrorism, despite the aggression against us. We are believers in peace and in fighting violence, and we are ready to cooperate with any country to fight terrorism. We are against terrorism and violence, by whomever, and we will resort to peaceful popular resistance.

Look at what is happening now in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, thousands have taken to the streets to say no to the deal. It is not my position alone, the entire Palestinian people say no to the deal.

Finally, I tell the world: be careful not to kill the hope of the Palestinian people. I came here to preserve hope, don't take that hope away from us.

I thank you, Mr. President.



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